

by a performance text. This cooperation is contained in the performance as a textual strategy, and is analytically detectable through a series of implicit or explicit signals.

21. As I have already clarified in 3.4., a text is never "totally" open, and consequently, the number of (pertinent) readings that can be performed on it is always finite, even if sometimes indefinable. This is also true for the examples that follow in the text, and especially in the case for the "very open" performance text which I will discuss later.

22. In formulating the theory of success, the *Natya-Sastra* distinguishes between divine success, expected from the most educated and cultured spectators, belonging to the highest social classes, who are capable of going deepest in their interpretation of the work, and human success, which refers to the spectators of a more modest social level and more superficial fruition (Ghosh).

23. For this reason I will deal only with the strictly cognitive aspects of theatrical reception, leaving aside the dynamics of the "emotions," the importance of which I have already demonstrated in the previous chapter. Theatrical reception is an emotional fact as well as an intellectual and hermeneutic practice. It is an issue of not only *comprehension* but also *experience* in the broader sense.

24. For a definition of a "textual competence" within a generative-transformational theory of the literary text, see van Dijk (1972b: 63 and *passim*). On the possibility of constructing a model of literary competence as a "major" competence of the ideal *homo poeticus*, see Ihwe (1972: 90ff.).

25. Since the theatrical sender is always a multiple sender, it would be interesting to analyze how awareness and use are divided up between each of the different sub-senders.

26. Clearly, the spectator's competence can be called /passive/ only in the technical sense specified in the text. Otherwise, as we have already seen, theatrical reception (like other types of aesthetic reception) is understood as the *active* process of semantically appropriating and actualizing the performance text, a process that allows a wide range of pragmatic results. On the distinction between active and passive competence in linguistics, see Minoi's argument—in contrast with the generative-transformational approach—that "each speaker is capable of decoding sentences and constructs that he would never be able to produce. *Active competence is thus less widely available than passive competence*" (1979: 347-48). See also Hymes (1972) and Castelfranchi and Parisi (1980: 32-33).

27. For similar observations on literature, see Di Girolamo (1970: 116-17). A very different situation applies in the case of many of the theatrical traditions of Asia (Balinese dance, for example), where some interchangeability of roles is always possible, and the active use of theatrical codes is available to a wide sector of the audience. If we take into account rituals of folk culture this difference increases. Generally, there is an almost coextensive active competence among all members of the social group, and, conversely, roles are institutionalized only to a minimal degree. None of this impinges on the general principle according to which active competence is more limited than passive competence in the case of every individual. *People always know how to use fewer codes than the number they are capable of comprehending.*

28. See note 31 in chapter 4.

29. I must note however that the distinctions that I am drawing at this juncture also apply in a general way to the receivers' competence.

30. "Society succeeds in recording encyclopedic information only to the degree that it has been provided by preceding texts. Encyclopedia and thesaurus are the distillation of other texts (in the form of macropropositions)" (Eco 1979: 24). Elam also mentions the spectator's intertextual competence which can be theatrical or extra-theatrical (1980: 93-94).

31. See note 36 below for an important observation on the use of the terms /perception/ and /comprehension/.

32. See Coppieters and Tindemans (1977: 35), Elam (87-90), and Goffman (1974) for a definition of the theatrical situation, and how it is recognized, in terms of framing activities. Elam defines the "theatrical frame" as follows: "The theatrical frame is in effect the product of a set of transactional conventions governing the participants' expectations and their understanding of the kinds of reality involved in the performance. The theatergoer will accept that, at least in dramatic representations, an alternative and fictional reality is to be presented by individuals designated as the performers" (88). Obviously, Elam's transactional conventions correspond in substance to what I call general conventions, sharing their range of application (representational theater, dramatic fiction).

33. In addition to the rules of genre in the strict sense, I include the performer's over-coded conventions (whether these are the conventions of a school, an artistic movement, or a geographical and cultural area) in the particular conventions. These rules have different degrees of generality and concern all the subclasses of the performance texts which can in some way be delimited in the macro-class /performance text/ (see below 7.5.). It should also be noted that I will use the expression /theatrical performance macro-class (genre)/ and /performance text macro-class (genre)/ to refer to the set of phenomena attributable to the field of theater, independently of whether they are equipped with the minimal requirements of textuality.

34. On this issue, see also below where I will propose that we conceive of genre as a hierarchical set of co-textual and contextual traits. For definitions of /co-text/ and /context/ of the performance text, see 2.7.

35. This is a hypothesis which provoked lively objections of a theoretical and methodological kind, at least in the narrowly linguistic field (see Scalise 1979 and Mioni 1979). For a systematic introduction to the vast field of sociolinguistic concerns, see Hymes (1974).

36. Naturally, the initial *perceptive* operations of iconic recognition are located further up (see Metz 1975). I will not deal with these operations in the present context, although they are very useful to Gestalt studies on the one hand (Arnheim, etc.), and to psychological studies on the relations between environment and cognition, such as Ittelson (1973), on the other. In this regard, it is important to study the impact of the physical *conditions of reception* on the degree of comprehension and the type of fruition.

37. In recent years there has been a reevaluation of the concept of /genre/ in various sectors of the theory and semiotics of the arts—in literature, mass communications, visual arts, and music: see Jauss (1970), Corti (1972), Hernadi (1972), Hempfer (1973), Culler (1975), Pye (1975), Todorov (1976), Casetti, Lumbelli, and Wolf (1978), Ryan (1979), Eco (1979), Stempel (1979), Segre (1979c), Genette (1979), Calabrese, ed. (1980), and Raible (1980).

38. Perhaps my definition of genre at this juncture is not far from Aristotle's definition in the *Poetics*, which distinguishes between the *goals*, *means*, and *modes* of mimesis. Genette has also come to similar conclusions (1979). Corti, on the other hand, stresses genre as a set of rules of correlation between expression and content, neglecting the pragmatic-contextual aspects.

39. The macro-genre /performance text/ obviously constitutes the widest class of performance texts that can be delimited, since it includes all performance events which are theatrical. This macro-class is defined by a series of *constant-co-textual* and contextual traits which I examined above in chapters 2, 3, and 4. It is on the basis of these traits that the spectator recognizes a given artistic occurrence as theatrical.

40. As is obvious, my descriptive-analytic notion of /genre/ is very close to the category of *textual type* proposed by an entire branch of the *Textlinguistik* writers (Gülich and Raible, ed., 1972, for example) and recently utilized in various research fields (van Dijk 1972a; Petöfi 1974a; Simonin-Grumbach 1975; Schmidt 1977; Guarino 1978; Ryan 1979). The definition of /type/ proposed by van Dijk is especially pertinent to my own approach: "a type is the selection of class within a given discursive universe, and is defined by a set of properties and/or relations that are satisfied by all members of the class" (van Dijk 100). Given this approach, it is clear that the difference between true genres and other classes of performances texts is no longer *qualitative* but *quantitative*.

41. This hypothesis is at the basis of my definition of *particular conventions*, of which genre rules are only one example, though the best known.

42. Theoretically at least, this does not preclude the possibility of defining a textual type, as we have seen in note 40 above.

43. There is an obvious difference in this regard between theater and the field of mass communications (cinema, television, and journalism), where genre plays an important part. In theater, it is hardly a coincidence that genres have survived above all in forms of popular entertainment—variety shows, cabaret, musicals, and the like.

44. For the differences between grammaticality, acceptability, and appropriateness, see 7.8. Wolf claims however that from this standpoint we must distinguish between receiver genres and sender genres, at least with respect to television (Wolf 36). I agree with the necessity for such a distinction in theater also. This explains why I am treating theatrical conventions from a different standpoint here than in chapter 4.

45. "Given a certain context of comprehension where information such as the author's name, the preface, the publisher, the external appearance of the book/magazine/newspaper, are available for use, it is possible to infer a provisional hypothesis that the text is a short story (or novel), a travel guide, or a newspaper report. The reader/listener will appropriately select the macro-operations that will apply to those parts of the discourse that are relevant from a pragmatic standpoint" (van Dijk 1977a: 359).

46. Provisionally and hypothetically, we could imagine an "average competence," produced by the theatrical ideology of representation, dominant in the West from the seventeenth century onward. On the basis of the distinctions which I introduced in 7.5., this is a "defective" competence, characterized by a very rigid adherence to the general conventions and a tendency to transform them into absolute tenets (theater is *only*, or *is always*, fiction, imitation of life, representation). This kind of competence is incapable of carrying out the interpretive corrections that become necessary where dealing with theatrical events produced outside the general conventions.

47. For observations on the tendency toward the *real*, the *natural*, and the *physical* in recent theatrical experimentation, see Quadri's examples, ranging from the Carozzone/Magazzini Criminali in Florence to the performances by Peter Stein and Klaus Michael Grüber in Berlin (Quadri 1977 and 1979).

48. Newspaper editors have difficulty in assigning critics to review the shows by Meredith Monk and Lucinda Childs—based on a fascinating interlinguistic mixture of acting, singing, music, and dance—since it is not clear whether these performances should be reviewed by a music critic, a theater critic, or a dance critic. Sometimes all three attend, misunderstanding what they see and hear because of their narrowly compartmentalized attitudes.

49. A basic bibliography on the semantics and pragmatics of titles can be found in Eco, who proposes a distinction between "titles providing the textual theme" and "titles that mislead, leave the decision to the reader, and present themselves as

willfully open and ambiguous" (1979: 73). See also Casadei (1980), and especially Hoek (1981).

50. On the difference between grammaticality and acceptability in generative transformational linguistics, see Pugliatti's precise exposition (1976: 74). In the field of textual pragmatics, see van Dijk's distinction between *ideal* or abstract acceptability and *actual* acceptability (1972b: 223-24). See Hymes on the necessity for defining a broader theory of communicative competence, including rules of appropriateness (1972: 233ff.).

51. Although I made a distinction between the *performance* context and the *cultural* context in 2.7., I now wish to designate a broader category with the term /context/ that includes elements of both components.

52. This should not contradict my earlier statement on general competence and the macro-genre of the performance text. In fact, the judgments formulated by the spectator on the basis of general competence are not judgments of acceptability or appropriateness but *judgments of recognizability*, so to speak. As we have seen, this permits the recognition of a theatrical performance as such, bringing it within the macro-genre of the performance text. When these judgments are transformed into judgments of appropriateness, it is always in reference to a subclass (genre) of the performance text that they are pronounced. It could happen that a nonrepresentational performance would not be recognized as theatrical on the basis of such criteria, but the judgment of inappropriateness underlying the failure in recognition (/this is not theater!/) is only apparently expressed with respect to the performance text as a whole. In reality, what is referred to is the very large subclass of representational theater.

53. Clearly, however, in the case of "open" performance texts such as these, even a "naive" fruition with little intertextual competence can function quite well provided that it is free of the stereotypes and prejudices which condition the reception of a certain type of spectator, often leading to rejection and incomprehension.

54. Modern ballet's definitive transcendence of the nineteenth-century conventions of "*danse aérienne*," based mainly on the principle of *élévation*, is emblematically noted in Fokine's letter to the *Times* (July 6, 1914), where the famous choreographer called for a reintegration of the expressive values of pantomime into dance, reducing "conventional gestures" to the barest minimum, and, above all, affirming the necessity of "substituting hand gestures with full-body mime. Man can and must be expressive from head to toe" (cited in Bentivoglio 1977: 29-30).

55. The reverse is not always true, however. Not all discursive occurrences possessing these two requirements constitute /theatrical performances/. Hence the necessity for restrictions of the type I listed in my definition in chapter 2 ("in a performance environment," and so on).

56. It should be noted that I have used the term /text/ in this volume in its usual double meaning, to designate concrete discursive entities as well as the theoretical construct which analyzes them in their semiotic functioning.